

Reborn, Reunited, Repurposed

by YappiChick

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Summary: She, of all people, knew the way John thought and acted. It was too much, too soon. Spoilers/Spec for Halo 4. Decidedly Chief/Cortana.

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**\*\*Written for patriot\_jackie for the kissing meme. Spoilers/Spec for Halo 4. And yes, this is blatantly Chief/Cortana. Y'all have been warned.\*\***

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><p>Cortana wasn't upset by John's awkwardness around her. She understood his confusion. He had said goodbye to her, mourned her and forced himself to move on. Then, by the intervention of a rebel sect of the Forerunners, she had been reborn, reunited and repurposed for the fight against those that wanted to kill them.<p>

Their reunion had been short and public. When she, in her new synthetic body, had explained who she was and that she was rejoining him, he had given a curt nod in her direction before walking on board the \_Infinity.\_

He had made himself scarce during his time aboard the ship. His armor had been taken by the techs that were on the ship to extrapolate the data he had collected about the Forerunners and see if they would be able to use Cortana's upgrades for the Spartan IV's that were with them.

She walked the halls of the damaged vessel to pass the time. The lower decks had been destroyed by the crash landing, but the upper ones provided her with a panoramic view of the planet. The captain was still deciding their next course of action and she was forced to wait for her next orders.

Cortana made her way to a deserted section of the \_Infinity\_ and allowed herself to catch up with everything that had happened since that day when she had woken up John with the \_Dawn\_ exploding around them.

She wasn't alone for long, however.

John walked up to her and looked at her. She was taken aback by the emotion in his eyes.

"I lost you."

His normally stoic voice nearly broke on the last word. He shifted his eyes from hers, looking away.

Cortana moved to stand in front of him. Saying goodbye to him had been one of the most difficult things she had done, but she would have never assumed it was as difficult for the Spartan.

"But, I'm here now," she whispered softly. Then, Cortana lifted up on her toes and pressed her lips to John's cheek. It was warm and softer than she expected. The barely-there stubble grazed her lips. Without thinking, she moved over several inches and placed a kiss on his lips.

He didn't return the gesture.

Instead, Cortana felt him stiffen at her personal touch.

Immediately, she chastised herself. She, of all people, knew the way John thought and acted. It was too much, too soon.

She pulled away from him, resisting the urge to reach up and wipe away the moisture off his cheek. With more courage than she felt, she forced herself to look him in the eye.

He studied her for a second, wordlessly assessing her.

"I'm sorry, Jo-"

"Don't."

Her brow furrowed, perplexed. She couldn't remember the last time - or any time - he had interrupted her in mid-sentence.

Another handful of seconds passed. Cortana was fighting an inner struggle; she wanted to push her apology forward, but she respected the man in front of her to give him time to speak.

"I missed you," he finally said.

A flash of uncertainty flashed in his eyes. Then, he lowered his head down and pressed his lips against her own. His lips were dry, his movements rigid, but, to Cortana, the kiss felt exactly as she had hoped for.

He stepped back a moment later, searching her face.

Cortana gave him an encouraging smile. The kiss wouldn't taint their

relationship with one another. They were, in their cores,  
soldiers.

But, a kiss every now and again wasn't bad either, Cortana  
admitted.

"Come on, Chief," she said, smothering a smile. "We've got a fight to  
finish."

End  
file.